CLAIMS

1. A method for treatment of a human patient sample for carrying out a diagnostic method on the sample for detection of an infectious agent, wherein the sample is an endocervical fluid sample or a vaginal fluid sample, which includes the step of carrying out the diagnostic method in the presence of DNase.

2. A method according to claim 1 wherein the DNase is present in an amount of more than 0.5 μg/ml, preferably 0.5 to 100 μg/ml.

3. A method according to claim 1 wherein the DNase is present in an amount of more than 1.5 units of activity per ml, preferably 1.5 to 300 units activity per ml.

4. A method according to any of claims 1 to 3 which additionally includes a method for preparation of a human patient sample prior to carrying out a diagnostic method on the sample for detection of an infectious agent, which preparative method includes the step of treating the sample with an oxidizing agent.

5. A method according to claim 4 wherein the oxidizing agent is hydrogen peroxide (H_2O_2).

6. A method according to claim 5 using a working concentration of hydrogen peroxide of 0.5% to 3% w/v.

7. A method according to any of claims 1 to 3 or 4 to 6 which additionally includes the step of treating the sample with a non-ionic alkyl glucoside surfactant.

8. A method according to claim 7 wherein the surfactant is n-dodecyl maltoside.

9. A method according to claim 8 wherein the n-dodecyl maltoside is present at a working concentration of 0.01% to 0.04% w/v, preferably 0.015% to 0.03%.

10. A method according to any of claims 1 to 3 or 4 to 6 or 7 to 9 which additionally includes the step of treating the sample either or both of PVA and PVP.

11. A method according to claim 10 wherein wherein the sample is treated with PVA, preferably having an average molecular weight between 20 and 25 kĐa and at a working concentration of between 0.01 and 0.5% w/v.

12. A method according to claim 10 wherein the sample is treated with PVP at a working concentration between 0.2% and 2% w/v.

13. A method according to any of claims 1 to 3, which additionally comprises a method step according to any of claims 10 to 12 and a method step according to any of claims 7 to 9 and a method step according to any of claims 4 to 6.

14. A method according to any of claims 1 to 13 wherein the human patient sample is obtained as a self-collected vaginal swab sample.

15. A method according to any of claims 1 to 13 wherein the method is for detection of *Chlamydia trachomatis*.

16. A method according to any of claims 1 to 13 wherein the patient sample is a self-collected vaginal swab sample and the method is for detection of *Chlamydia trachomatis*.

17. A method according to any preceding claim wherein the method is a dipstick test method.

18. A kit comprising:

- a dipstick test apparatus for carrying out a specific infectious agent detection test;
- reagents required for said apparatus in order to carry out said specific detection tests;
- a DNase reagent for carrying out the method of any of claims 1 to 3.

19. A kit according to claim 18 additionally comprising:

- an oxidizing agent reagent for carrying out the method of any of claims 4 to 6.

20. A kit according to claim 18 additionally comprising:

- a non-ionic alkyl glucoside reagent for carrying out the method of any of claims 7 to 9.

21. A kit according to claim 18 additionally comprising:

- a reagent which is PVA and/or PVP for carrying out the method of any of claims 10 to 12.

22. A kit according to claim 18 additionally comprising:

- a non-ionic alkyl glucoside surfactant reagent as defined in any of claims 4 to 6 and a PVA and/or PVP reagent as defined in any of claims 7 to 9 for carrying out the method of any of claims 1 to 15.